

## **IN THE CLAIMS**

1. (currently amended) A method of accrediting participants to an event, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) collecting information from each of said participants;
- b) recording the information in an accreditation system;
- c) producing a non-valid pass for each of said participants;
- d) issuing the respective non-valid passes to said participants; and
- e) upon arrival of such a participant at or proximate an event venue, validating said

non-valid pass for the participant, thereby accrediting said participant, wherein the non-valid pass is issued in d) prior to the participant's arrival and the participant presents the non-valid pass for validation upon such arrival, or else the issuing non-valid pass is issued in d) to the participant is upon such participant's arrival so that the non-valid, issued pass can then be validated, and wherein the validating of the non-valid, issued pass in step e) includes the steps of:

updating an accreditation status of the participant in the accreditation system; and

laminating the pass in a security pouch, wherein the laminated pass includes a photograph of the participant to provide a physical form of validation, so that the participant is granted access to the event responsive to identifying the pass in the security pouch as worn by the participant, and wherein the pass is for access to the event and not for access to repeated instances of the event.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, comprising the further step of:  
upon arrival of such a participant, verifying information of said participant before said non-valid pass is validated.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, comprising the further steps of:  
for foreign participants and before arrival of participants, sending a bulk visa request to an Immigration Authority; and

receiving a visa status from said Immigration Authority, allowing said validated pass to serve as a visa.

4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, comprising the further steps of:  
ascribing an accreditation class to each of said participants; and  
ascribing privileges to each of said accreditation classes.
5. (currently amended) Apparatus for accrediting participants to an event, said apparatus comprising:  
means for collecting information from each of said participants;  
means for recording the information in an accreditation system;  
producing means for producing a non-valid pass for each of said participants;  
issuing means for issuing the respective non-valid passes to said participants; and  
validating means for validating said non-valid pass for such a participant upon the participant's arrival at, or proximate an event venue, thereby accrediting said participant, wherein the non-valid pass is issued prior to the participant's arrival and the participant presents the non-valid pass for validation upon such arrival, or else the issuing non-valid pass is issued to the participant is upon such participant's arrival so that the non-valid, issued pass can then be validated, and wherein the validating means of the non-valid, issued pass includes:  
means for updating the accreditation status of the participant in the accreditation system;  
and  
means for laminating the pass in a security pouch, wherein the laminated pass includes a photograph of the participant to provide a physical form of validation, so that the participant is granted access to the event responsive to identifying the pass in the security pouch as worn by the participant, and wherein the pass is for access to the event and not for access to repeated instances of the event.
6. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, further comprising:  
for foreign participants and before arrival of said participants, means for sending a bulk visa request to an Immigration Authority; and

means for receiving a visa status from said Immigration Authority, allowing said validated pass to serve as a visa.

7. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, further comprising:
  - means for ascribing an accreditation class to each of said participants; and
  - means for ascribing privileges to each of said accreditation classes.
8. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein said apparatus is a distributed system comprising interconnected servers and workstations.
9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the non-valid passes issued to the participants are issued by an organiser of the event, wherein the participant non-valid passes form a first portion of a valid pass and the participants include support staff associated with organisations supporting the event, and wherein the method comprises the steps of:
  - producing support organisation non-valid passes, wherein such a support organisation non-valid pass forms a second portion of a valid pass; and
  - issuing the support organisation non-valid passes by the event organiser for distribution by said support organisations to selected ones of the participants associated with the respective support organisations, wherein the support organisation non-valid passes and the participant non-valid passes are issued in differing quantities, the quantity of support organisation non-valid passes being smaller than that of the participant non-valid passes, and wherein the validating in step e) uses both the first and second portions of the pass.
10. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the non-valid passes issued to the participants are issued by an organiser of the event, wherein the participant non-valid passes form a first portion of a valid pass and the participants include support staff associated with organisations supporting the event;
  - wherein the producing means is further for producing support organisation non-valid passes, wherein such a support organisation non-valid pass forms a second portion of a valid pass; and

wherein the issuing means is further for issuing the support organisation non-valid passes by the event organizer for distribution by said support organisations to selected ones of the participants associated with the respective support organisations, wherein the support organisation non-valid passes and the participant non-valid passes are issued in differing quantities, the quantity of support organisation non-valid passes being smaller than that of the participant non-valid passes, and wherein the validating means uses both the first and second portions of the pass.